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E. Edmondson

The Dutch in Western Guiana

I. THE SETTLEMENT FROM TOBAGO.

ALL students of the Venezuelan boundary question (which was chiefly an historical controversy) are aware of the importance attaching to certain statements made by Major John Scott in his 'descriptions' of Guiana, Tobago, and Barbados, preserved in the original manuscript of the writer now in the British Museum.¹ They are also aware that Professors Burr and Jameson, on behalf of the United States Commission, endeavoured with a considerable measure of success to throw discredit on Scott's testimony in its bearing upon the history of Dutch colonisation in Western Guiana, and that their arguments were adopted and repeated in a manner implying that the last word had been said upon the subject by those engaged in presenting the case of the Venezuelan government before the court of arbitration.² A careful examination of all available evidence has led me to form an entirely different opinion upon the trustworthiness of Scott. I propose, therefore, no longer in the interests of a dead political controversy, but in order to throw more light upon the obscure annals of early colonisation in the Caribbean Sea, (1) to set forth briefly the grounds on which credibility may be claimed for Scott's statements, and (2) to corroborate circumstantially his accounts of the early Dutch settlements upon the Essequibo and Pomeroon.

The credibility of a writer relating otherwise unknown historical facts depends upon (1) his nearness to the events narrated, (2) his personal access to sure sources of information, (3) his motives in writing, (4) his proved accuracy in cases where his statements can be verified. All these tests are absolutely satisfactory in the instance of Major John Scott. That officer was the commander of

¹ Sloane MS. 3662. It is admitted that the descriptions of Guiana, Tobago, Barbados, &c., contained in this manuscript are in the handwriting of Scott. They were written by him about 1667, and are the extant fragments of a large projected work on the coasts and islands of America.

² U.S.C. Report, i. 62-4, 172-8; ii. 133-8. Venez. Case, iii. 358, 360-1. Counter Case, i. 36-8; ii. 62-5.

the English expedition which in 1665-6 captured the island of Tobago and the Dutch colonies on the Essequibo and Pomeroon. He himself tells us in his preface that he had always been a great lover of geography and history, and that from an early age he had purposed to write a large description of all America, also that he had personally been upon no less than one hundred and twenty-six islands in the Atlantic Ocean, and had travelled over (among other places) a great part of Guiana. His method of acquiring information about his subject is best given in his own words.

I made it my business to purchase or borrow all the history and Journalls that I could heare of whether Lattin, Itallian Spanish or Portugais French Dutch or in our Language, wherein I may say I have by reason of a generall generous conversation had luck extraordinary, and herein wt paines I have taken what cost I have been att is so Notorious, that over and above the knowledge of a great number of Gentlemen which I have been obliged too for a communication of printed books, Mannuscripts, Pattents Commissions, and papers relating to those parts, the many booksellers of England and Holland will doe me Right to testifie my continuall inquisition.

As to his sources of knowledge for all that concerns Guiana in particular, our author speaks very fully. He tells us 'the two greatest Travailers that ever were in Guiana of Christians' were both prisoners in his hands on his voyage to Guiana in 1665.

The one was Matteson born at Gaunt, that had managed a trade 22 years for the Spaniards from ye City of St. Thome in Oronoque. The other was one Hendricson a Switz by Nation, that had served some Dutch Merchants in those parts 27 yeares in Quallity of a Factor with the upland Indians of Guiana.

From these men, in that spirit of inquisition of which he tells us above, he appears to have gathered all the information he could, and compared it with the results of his own investigations as traveller and student, or, to use his own words, 'haveing besides my owne observacions, taken measures from the above mentioned Mr. Hendrickson and Matteson, and Journalls, I fortun'd to meet with.' To this may be added his statement that 'in this Colonie (Essequibo) the author had the good fortune to meet with some ingenious observations of the former Governor (Groenewegen) of what had been transacted in Guiana in his time.' It is clear then in the narrative given by Scott of the early history of the Dutch colonies in Western Guiana that we are dealing with the narrative of a contemporary, familiar with the localities about which he was writing, conversant with all the literature upon the subject, including documents and journals in manuscript, and having exceptional opportunities for personal commune with men intimately acquainted for a long period with the country and its history. It is further important to note that the work, which was never published

and of which only a fragment was committed to paper, was a long cherished design, the preparation for which was scientifically thorough and carried on for years, and that it is impossible to attribute to the writer any motives of political partisanship, or any other aim than that put forth by himself 'of giving new accounts from observations of my owne (or such living testimonies as I could credit) touching those places which have not been sufficiently sett forth by any man before me.' On *prima facie* grounds, then, the credibility of what is told by Scott should stand very high; it will be seen by what follows that such a claim is fully borne out by the accuracy which is shown by him in those parts of his narrative which can be historically verified.

The Pomeroon Colonies of 1650-1651.

In the description of Tobago³ the following passages occur:—

The Duke of Corland Anno 1639 sent a ship thither accomodated with trade to buy it (the island) of the Indians and to take possession of it in his Right, being before this sufficiently informed of their inclination to trade with the Dutch or English, he purchased it and the natives gave him a cleare possession dispersing themselves to Guiana, to Trinidada and some of them to St. Vincents an Isle north North west forty Leagues from Tobago. These people being new hands, as they phrase them in these parts and having noe experienced Planters in their Collonie, and people that came soe far fro the Northward and not any amongst them that knew what was food or Physick in their proper seasons, did occasion their mouldering to nothing.

. . . . Anno 1642 one Captain Marshall from Barbados begun a second Colonie by the good liking of Robert Earle of Warwick, begun to plant tobacco and Indigo &c: but were often disturbed by the Caribees, and at length for want of supplies were forced to quitt it, went for Suranam, where the same fate followed them; these people thus drove of the Duke of Corland maketh a second attempt, by People from Zealand under the command of one Captain Coroon an old Brazillian, a gentleman of good conduct, but his old masters of Holland having an eye that way, advised him to carry a faire correspondency with the Arrawacoos which he did to the disgust of the Careebs of St Vincent who tooke their advantage and destroyed a great part of that hopefull Colonie. while they are in this distresse ye Arrawacoos fro Trinidada came to their reliefe, where there was but 70 left of 310 whome they relieved removeing them to the river Bowroma on the coast of Guiana where they became a flourishing Colonie by the preservacon of the Arrawacoos.

In the 'description of Guiana,'⁴ where a list is given of the various colonies established in this region by different nations, we read—

The twelfth Colonie was of Dutch settled by the Zealanders in the rivers, Borowma, Wacopow, Moroca, having been drove of fro Tobago Anno 1650,

³ Sloane M. 3662, ff. 47-8.

⁴ *Ibid.* f. 40.

and ye years following a great Collonie of Dutch and Jewes, drove of fro Brazile by the Portugaise settled there and being experienced planters that soone grewe a Flourishing Colonie.

It may be assumed that the colonies to the river Bowroma mentioned in these two passages are one and the same. This is admitted by Professor Burr, who nevertheless without any examination of the data furnished by the writer asserts that Scott is referring to the later formation of the Colony of Nova Zeelandia, but has made an error in date, writing 1650 for 1658.⁵ Now there is nothing whatever in common between the known circumstances of the foundation of Nova Zeelandia in 1658 and those related by Scott of the colony which left Tobago for the Bowroma or Pomeroun in 1650. The twofold narrative, however, contains so many minute and incidental details that it is not a difficult task to show its remarkable historical accuracy, and thus to infer that the event that it records took place at the time and in the manner so circumstantially corroborated.

The history of the colonisation of Tobago, and especially of the part taken in it by the Dutch and the duke of Courland, is exceedingly complicated, and a correct knowledge of it furnishes us with a touchstone wherewith to test the trustworthiness of Scott's statement. There were three claimants to the ownership of Tobago during the greater part of the seventeenth century, the English, the Dutch, and the Courlanders. James, duke of Courland, was the godson and namesake of King James I of Great Britain, and it was common report in England at the time that the king presented his godson with the island of Tobago as a christening gift.⁶ Be this as it may, it is certain that Charles I, by letters patent dated 25 Feb. 1628, granted Tobago to Philip, earl of Pembroke, who afterwards disposed of his grant to Robert, earl of Warwick. The facts concerning these grants are given by Scott, who likewise recounts the abortive attempt of Captain Marshall to colonise Tobago, and sets forth at length a series of eight propositions made by Lord Warwick with the object of inducing colonists to settle on his island, which on the face of them are clearly authentic.

The first colony upon the island was made under the auspices of Jan de Moor, burgomaster of Flushing, an enterprising merchant and trader, long closely connected with the Dutch settlement on the Essequibo, and consisted of Zeelanders from Walcheren. This colony was destroyed by the Caribs aided by a Spanish force from Trinidad in 1637.⁷

⁵ *U.S.C. Report*, ii. 137.

⁶ Cruse, *Courland unter den Herzogen*, i. 146.

⁷ *U.S.C. Report*. Extracts from Dutch archives, nos. 18 and 37. The latter document contains a most interesting report to the West India Company of the fate of the colony, written by Jacques Ousiel, late public advocate of Tobago (*Brit. C., App. i. 83; Ven. C. ii. 21*). Another account may be found in the British Museum, Egerton MS. 2395, f. 50v, in a document entitled 'The Pretensions of the Dutch to Tobago.'

James, duke of Courland, was seized with the ambition to possess himself of new lands and avenues for commerce across the ocean. In Cruse's history we read of his sending ships in 1639 to the coast of Guinea, and in Scott that he further despatched a vessel to Tobago with the double object of buying the soil from the Indians and thus securing himself from their hostility, which had so recently proved fatal to the Zeelanders, and then of taking possession in his right—*i.e.* the right derived from the supposed donation of James I. This colony, being composed of Courlanders from the far north, unused to life in a tropical climate, mouldered away through disease. Then in 1642, on the failure of Marshall's English settlement, the duke made a second attempt by people from Zeeland under the command of an old Brazilian. There are several records of the establishment of the Courland colony, but none of them are so exact as Scott's in their details, the expedition of 1639 being blended with that of 1642, and both in certain particulars confused with the Walcheren colony, which came to an end in 1637. It is curious, however, to find that the discrepancies and mistakes in these accounts can be accounted for by Scott's fuller narrative in the Sloane MS.

In a work entitled '*Tobago Insulae Caraibicae in America sitae Fatum*,' dedicated to Frederick William, duke of Courland, by an author who signs himself '*J. C. P.*' in a preface dated from the Hague in 1705, the account runs thus in the original :—

Duas ex Curlandia ad Tobago insulam profectas memini colonias, quae parem fere sortem nactae sunt. Causa non eadem fuit ceu exsequentibus colligere est. Prima expeditio suscepta est circa annum 1642 & sequentem. Res tunc suas constabilivere Curlandi exstructo & opposito Caribum excursionibus munimento cui a Celsissimo duce Jacobo nonnen fuit. Haud ita multo post Selandorum naves aliquot ad insulam appulerunt & commorandi ibi, partemque agrorum sub levi in recognitionis legitimae locum penso possidendi facultatem obtinuerunt ab illo.

In this passage the second colony referred to is that of 1654.⁸ Scott's colonies of 1639 and 1642 are comprised in the statement, 'The first colony was undertaken about the year 1642.' It will be noticed, however, that mention is made first of a colony of Courlanders, then of Zeelanders, as in Scott. The building of a fort⁹ to defend the colony against the incursion of the Caribs was the natural consequence of Captain Marshall's English settlers having just been driven off (according to Scott) by those warlike savages. On p. 24 is a quotation from an author who gave, in 1657, an account of the first Dutch colony :—

Mais les Indiens Caraïbes habitants naturels du Pays, redoutant le voisinage de ces étrangers en massacrerent une partie, ce qui obligea les

⁸ *Infra*, p. 649.

⁹ Cruse, i. 146.

autres qui etaient travaillez de maladies & qui apprehendirent un pareil traitement que leurs compagnons à se retirer ailleurs.

Here we have a blending of the catastrophe which overtook the Zeelanders, as narrated by Jacques Ousiel, with 'the mouldering' of the Courlanders some two years later as told by Scott.

Other striking coincidences may be found in the account given of these first Dutch and Courland colonies in a book by an anonymous author, with the title 'Tobago; or, a Geographical Description, Natural and Civil History, in which is comprehended whatever is to be met with in Spanish, Dutch, French, or English Writers relating thereto from its discovery to the present time, fully exploding the chimera of a French Title and clearly shewing the Sovereignty thereof ever was, and now is, in the Crown of Great Britain' (London, 1750?) This writer (p. 29) says—

About the time of the breaking out of our Civil wars which interrupted all schemes of improvement, the Dutch from Brazil having taken a view of the island, made so favourable a report of it upon their return to their own Country that a Company of Traders at Flushing resolved to undertake the settling of it, and to bestow upon it the name of New Walcheren.

Here follows a circumstantial account of the founding of the colony, set on foot by Jan de Moor and of its destruction by the Caribs, aided by the Spaniards from Trinidad, which is in entire accordance with the narrative of Jacques Ousiel. After stating that 'this was the beginning and end of the first Dutch settlement on the island of Tobago,' our author proceeds—

About ten years after this James, Duke of Courland, the godson of our King, James the First, a Prince of Great Prudence and Abilities, and who was particularly inclined to promote the commerce and navigation of his subjects, sent a ship or two into the American seas, in search of some uninhabited island, where a settlement might be made, and his Agents finding the island of Tobago, fruitful in itself, finely situated and very capable of improvement fixed themselves there, with which the Duke was so well pleased that he sent them over a reinforcement of men, and what supplies were necessary, so that at his expense they built a pretty good Towne and erected a strong Fort, to which they gave their Sovereign's name.

It is quite clear that the writer has seen an account of the expedition, recorded by Scott, which left Zeeland in 1642 'under the command of one Captain Coroon,' an old Brazilian, and has taken it to be the genesis of the colony planned years before by Guiana merchants at a time when no Dutch Brazil as yet existed. Probably the document used contained no reference to the duke of Courland, whose occupation of Tobago was studiously ignored by Dutch writers. Even the '*Histoire Naturelle et Morale des Iles Antilles de l'Amérique*,' published at Rotterdam in 1658, which

contains much about Tobago, does not mention his name, nor does the Egerton MS. 2395, f. 509, on the 'Pretension of the Dutch to Tobago.' The fact recorded by the contemporary Scott furnishes thus an obvious explanation of what would otherwise have appeared to be an inexplicable mistake on the part of the writer of 1750. It will be noticed that this writer has the two Courland expeditions mentioned by Scott confused in his mind. He speaks of the duke first sending 'a ship or two into the American seas in search of an uninhabited island where a settlement might be made,' and that his agents fixed themselves in Tobago. He then says that at some later indetermined time 'the duke was so well pleased that he sent them over a reinforcement of men, and what supplies were necessary.'

At first sight it would appear exceedingly improbable that a body of Zeelanders under the command of an old Dutch Brazilian would enter the duke of Courland's service with the object of colonising an island to which their own countrymen laid claim. The paper written by myself on the 'Swedish Legend in Guiana'¹⁰ proves the exact contrary. Thousands of Dutchmen were at this very time in the Swedish service. Swedish commerce was, in fact, in their hands, and Courland was in a sense a dependency of Sweden. There was nothing apparently that Dutchmen during this century more dearly relished than the opportunity of poaching upon their countrymen's colonial preserves under the shelter of a foreign flag. Curiously enough a namesake of our 'Captain Coroon,' the famous explorer and pioneer in the east, François Caron, who was the first man to open out Japan to European commerce, and who became, in 1647, director-general of the East Indian trade at Batavia, shortly afterwards left the Dutch service for that of the French king. The very unlikeliness, therefore, of Scott's statement to those unfamiliar with the byways of Dutch commercial history in the seventeenth century turns out to be the strongest guarantee of its veracity.

To proceed, Scott tells us that Coroon's

old masters of Holland advised him to carry on a *faire* correspondence with the Arrawacoes which he did to the disgust of the Careebs of St Vincent whoe tooke their advantage and destroyed a great part of that hopefull Colonie.

The Arawaks here mentioned are plainly those living on the Pomeroon, with whom the Dutch had already for many years through their resident factors cultivated friendly relations. It was an attempt to renew the project of Jan de Moor and establish regular intercourse between Tobago and the opposite Guiana shore. But, precisely as in the case of Jan de Moor's colony, this aroused

¹⁰ *Engl. Hist. Rev.* Jan. 1899.

the enmity of the Caribs of St. Vincent, some of whom Scott had previously told us had moved from Tobago when the island was originally purchased by the duke of Courland, and who were implacable enemies of the Arawaks. (Fray Pedro Simon writes of them, *Guerra han tenido siempre con los Caribes por tener entre ellos sangrientos enemistades.*) A sudden attack seems to have been made, with the result that the greater part of the colonists perished. The news appears to have reached the Arawaks of Trinidad, who hastened to their help and transported the poor remnant—seventy only out of 310 survived—to settle among their kinsfolk on the Pomeroon. (This is exactly in accordance with the Arawaks' habits as described by Fray Pedro Simon: *Assi salen a la mar de ordinario con piragues a buscarlos y pelear con ellos.*)

It remains for us to show that this emigration from Tobago to the Pomeroon took place in 1650, according to Scott's manuscript, and not in 1658, as Professor Burr assumes. Among the scanty records of the time it is fortunately possible to do this with something approaching to certainty.

In the anonymous English work on the history of Tobago already quoted we find immediately after the account of the Courland colony of 1642:—

It so fell out that two rich and potent Dutch Merchants, Magistrates of the province of Zealand, Messieurs 'Adrian and Cornelius Lampsins had formed a scheme for resettling Tobago, and accordingly fitted out A.D. 1654 some ships for that purpose, but upon finding the Courlanders already fixed and fortified there, and consequently in a condition to defend themselves, they knew not well how to execute their Commission. After some pretty warm expostulations it was agreed by both parties that as the Island was large enough the Dutch should settle at one corner; which they accordingly did under the Protection of the Duke of Courland, to whom, in consideration of this licence they were to pay an annual acknowledgment. Thus Tobago that was lately desert was in a fair way of being peopled by two Nations.¹¹

Cruse, drawing his information from Courland sources, tells us that the duke appealed to Cromwell to confirm his title as against the Dutch, and that it was through the influence of the Protector that the states-general, exhausted by the war with England, were unable to support the Lampsins in their effort to bring the island under Dutch sovereignty at this time. Be this as it may, it is certain that the duke remained lord of Tobago until 1658. At this date once more, to quote the author of 'Tobago,'

without the least previous Notice as well as without the smallest provocation the King of Sweden (Charles Gustavus) sent General Douglas with a

¹¹ Cf. A. J. van der Aa, *Biographisch Woordenboek der Nederlanden*, xi. 91, 92; Cruse, *Kurland unter den Herzogen*, i. 176.

body of troops into Courland which not only plundered the Country but seized the persons of the Duke and Duchess, tho she had lain in but a week and carried them away prisoner to Riga. . . . As soon as the news of this unfortunate Accident reached the ears of the Dutch in Tobago, they resolved to take advantage of it, and to make themselves Masters of the whole island,

the sequel being that they invested Fort James and compelled the governor to surrender. The duke, however, was a man of indomitable perseverance, and on his release from his imprisonment in 1662 he appealed to Charles II, who on 17 Nov. 1664 granted the island of Tobago to him, his heirs and successors.

From this brief sketch it is absolutely clear that between 1654 and 1664 no such event as that recorded by Scott could have taken place, since the Lampsins' colony was occupying a part or the whole of the island continuously during that time. Returning then to the original despatch of that colony from Zeeland, we may, I think, fairly assume that the brothers Lampsins would not have sent out an expedition to occupy and settle Tobago if they had believed that island to be already in the position of a foreign sovereign. But the intercourse between the ports of Walcheren and the West Indies by vessels of the Zeeland Chamber of the West Indian Company, of which these Flushing merchants were directors, was so frequent that the colonising of Tobago by the duke of Courland must have been a fact perfectly well known to them, more especially as the colonists were Zeelanders under the conduct of an old Dutch Brazilian. There exists, however, in the Hague archives a contract made in January 1649 by certain directors of the Zeeland Chamber, of whom Cornelius Lampsins was one, with the owners of the ship 'De Liefde' for the transport of commodities to and from the Wild Coast and the Essequibo,¹² the conditions of which make it probable that this ship would be absent from home for a lengthened period in the discharge of its commission. This, or some other ship (for others are mentioned in the contract), no doubt carried back to their employers at Flushing the news of the destruction of the Courland colony by the Caribs and the escape of the remnant under the protection of the Arawaks to the Pomeroon. Now, therefore, was the opportunity for the refounding of the 'New Walcheren,' which had perished so miserably in 1637, and we find that already in 1652 steps had been taken for obtaining the necessary sanction of the states-general. The outbreak of the war with England in May 1652 prevented any such expedition as was planned from leaving Zeeland, and in consequence it was not until after the conclusion of peace in 1654 that the vessels commissioned by Lampsins for the conveyance of his colonists to Tobago were able to set forth. When they arrived it

¹² *U.S.C. Report*, ii, 112.

was too late ; they found the island again in the occupation of the Courlanders, with the results above narrated.

The tidings of the catastrophe of 1650 would not be likely to reach the ears of the duke for many months, probably not for at least a year. To him, as to the Lampsins, the Anglo-Dutch war presented an obstacle in the way of any attempt to resuscitate his colony. At length, early in 1654 (probably, as Cruse says, with the connivance of Cromwell), an expedition from Courland managed to traverse the Atlantic in safety, to land on Tobago, rebuild the fort, and establish under the governor the authority of the duke. This is curiously authenticated by the letter of a well-known Brazilian official of the West India Company written to the states-general from Barbados, dated 8 Oct. 1654.¹³ M. Beck, the writer, was escaping from Seara, one of the last places of refuge for the Dutch in Brazil, with a body of fugitives for the West Indies. He tells their high mightinesses that

many persons from Brazil have come here (to Barbados) with the resolution of taking up their residence here, for they do not know what they could begin in Holland.

He then proceeds—

The prince of Courland has taken possession of the isle of Tobago, that we have touched at because of our loss of our rudder, so that we have passed six weeks there before finding an opportunity of continuing our course to the isle of Barbados with a large vessel of the prince of Courland that we have found there. I have profited by this occasion . . . and have learnt from monsieur the director there under what conditions he is charged by the prince to people and cultivate this isle, to wit. . . . The said director of the prince of Courland has erected a fortress, provided with seven pieces of cannon and a company of soldiers ; he is still expecting further forces.

Beck was, in fact, at Tobago precisely at the time when the Courlanders had just established themselves, but before the arrival of the Lampsins colony.

The circumstantial evidence for the accuracy of Scott's statement about the Pomeroon colony of 1650 could scarcely be stronger, and when he subjoins to his account of that emigration the further statement that 'ye yeare following (*i.e.* 1651) a great Collonie of Dutch and Jewes, drave of from Brazile by the Portugaise settled there and being experienced planters that soone grewe a Flourishing Colonie,' it can be easily shown to rest on an equally firm historical foundation. The quotation from Beck's letter shows how the fugitives from Dutch Brazil made their way to the West Indies, and how many of them settled there because of their unfitness to start life again in the old country. There is abundant evidence from other sources to the same effect (*e.g.* a pamphlet in the British

¹³ Varnhagen, *Os Hollandezes no Brazil*, notes and appendices, p. 334.

Museum, 'Cort, bondigh ende waerachtig verhael van't schandelijk overgeven ende verlaten vande voorname conquesten van Brazil e. 1654'). The exodus, however, in 1654, after the fall of the Reciff,¹⁴ consisted chiefly of soldiers and merchants; that of the planters had taken place earlier. All who are familiar with the history of the negotiations which preceded the treaty of Münster know how largely the fate of Brazil, threatened by the formidable Portuguese revolt, occupied the thoughts of the Dutch plenipotentiaries, and how the hopes of Hollanders and Zeelanders were centred, at the time of the conclusion of that peace, on the great relief expedition which, after many delays, at length set sail under the command of the famous Admiral Witte de With, and reached the Reciff on 18 March 1648, and how their hopes were dashed to the ground first by the severe defeat suffered by the Netherlanders, 19 April 1648, then by the dissensions which arose between the admiral and the grand council, lastly by the crushing overthrow of 19 Feb. 1649, which Netscher rightly describes as a mortal stroke to the power of the Dutch in Brazil.¹⁵ It was followed by the unauthorised return of De With to Holland, by the arrival of a Portuguese fleet in Brazilian waters and the close investment of the Reciff. The planters were thus driven from the open country to take refuge in the fortresses, and Varnhagen (p. 252) tells how, believing that all was lost, desertion daily increased, and that, alarmed by the signs of an approaching rupture with England, fifty vessels left between 15 May and 16 July 1651. What so natural as the fact, related by Scott, that a body of these fugitives should have joined themselves to their countrymen who had recently settled on the Pomeroon? The statement that a considerable portion of these consisted of Jews is also entirely in accordance with the historical circumstances of the case. There were many Jews in Dutch Brazil rich and influential men, both planters and merchants. One of the most far-sighted and statesmanlike measures of the great governor-general, John Maurice of Nassau, had been to permit to the Jewish inhabitants of the colony the free exercise of their faith, a measure which had its share in stirring up the Portuguese to revolt. The Jews knew that they had no mercy to expect from Spaniard or Portuguese, and that their safety depended entirely on the maintenance of the Dutch dominion.¹⁶ On the departure of John Maurice a large body of Jews left Pernambuco for Surinam, where they laid the foundation of a Dutch colony, probably in 1645 or 1646. It is in no way surprising, then, to find that in 1651 the prospect of speedily falling into the hands of their implacable enemies should have led

¹⁴ The capital of Dutch Brazil. ¹⁵ Netscher, *Hollandais au Brésil*, p. 159.

¹⁶ See Elias Herckman's 'Sommiers discours over den staet van Brasil 1639,' in the Utrecht Hist. Soc. *Bijdragen en Mededeelingen*, 1879, ii. 284.

the Jews mentioned by Scott to betake themselves while it was yet time, in company with other refugees, to the Pomeroon.

The war with England in 1652-3, which cut off communications between the mother country and its colonies in the Caribbean Sea, doubtless dealt a death-blow to the prosperity of the infant settlement. It was formed, as we have seen, of refugees without resources. Many of them thus isolated must have perished, and others, as soon as the sea was open, would be glad to effect their escape to Europe. Some probably, on learning of the Lampsins' expedition, would return to their old homes in Tobago. Among these was the 'old Brazillian,' Captain Caroon, himself. A minute in the secret resolutions of the states-general, Monday, 21 Aug. 1656, makes mention of a missive for the directors of the West India Company concerning certain overtures made to them by Cornelis Caron from Tobago. He is apparently plotting to secure through the directors a private footing in the island, already jointly occupied by the Zeeland and Courland colonists. They, however, remark that 'this Caron is not altogether to be trusted, seeing that he both in Brazil and also here at home hath committed notorious crimes. They recommend that information concerning him should be sought from the Zeeland Chamber, 'who have some colonies in those parts.' Unfortunately the reply of the Zeeland Chamber and all other documents relating to Caron's petition are lost.¹⁷ Here, however, we have clearly the same roving adventurer, who is described by Scott at an earlier time as leaving the Dutch service for that of the Courland prince, and who then, to please 'his old masters of Holland,' had carried on 'a faire correspondency with the Arrawacoos,' and was thus the cause of the colony being destroyed by the Caribs of St. Vincent.

II. THE EARLY HISTORY OF DUTCH SETTLEMENT ON THE ESSEQUIBO, 1616-1664.

The sixth Colonie (says Scott) was undertaken by one Captain Gromwedge, a Dutchman that had served the Spaniard in Oranoke, but understanding a companie of merchants of Zeeland had before undertaken a voyage to Guiana and attempted a settlement there, he deserted the Spanish service, and tendred himself to his owne countrey, which was accepted, and he despatched from Zeeland, anno 1616, with two ships and a galliote, and was the first man that took firme foteing on Guiana by the good likeing of the natives, whose humours the gent' perfectly understood. He erected a fort on a small island 80 leagues up the river Disseekeeb, which looked into two great branches of that famous river. All his time the Colonie flourished; he managed a great trade with the Spaniards by the Indians with great secrecy; he was a great friend of all new colonies

¹⁷ A search in the archives of the Hague was kindly made for me by Dr. Knutte of the Royal Library, but without result.

of Christians, of what nation soever and Barbadoes oweth its first assistance both for food and trade to this man's speciall kindness, anno 1627, at what time they were in a miserable condition. He dyed, anno 1664, and in the 83rd yeare of his age; a wealthy man having been governor of that Colonie 48 yeares. In this Colonie the authour had the good fortune to meete with some injenious observacions of the former Governor of what had been transacted in Guiana in his time, to whome the world is obliged for many particulars of this story.¹⁸

On this passage so many discerning and competent critics have pronounced adverse judgment that it is with extreme diffidence that I venture to oppose myself to such a consensus of opinion. The Dutch historian of the Essequibo colony, Netscher, speaks contemptuously of it, as

a fragment out of a manuscript of the Sloane Collection (British Museum) wherein mention was made of a certain Dutch Captain Gromweagle, who in 1616 built the fort Kijkoveral, remained 48 years Commandeur of it, and at last died there in 1664 at the age of 83 years as a very rich man! This improbable narrative has however been contradicted so absolutely by a number of exact data concerning the Commandeurs of Essequibo during this period, which we found in the State Archives (Rijks Archief) and shall further impart below, that we will not trouble ourselves any further with it. We have only mentioned it, because the name Gromweagle seems to us to be a corruption formed in the English manner of Groenewegel, the name of a Dutch skipper, who really as we shall see from 1657 to 1665 or 1666 acted as Commandeur at Kijkoveral, which thus may have been the starting point of the above fantastical story.¹⁹

On behalf of the United States commission Professors Burr and Jameson²⁰ treat Scott's narrative with equally scant courtesy, though at considerably greater length. And yet the corroboration that has been given above of the minute accuracy of the Sloane MS. narrative of the 'twelfth Colonie' should lead us *prima facie* to look for similar accuracy in what is related about the 'sixth.' The assumption ought to be in the writer's favour, the burden of proof to lie upon the traducers. As a matter of fact the arguments used against the credibility of Scott, with a single exception, have been based entirely upon the silence of existing contemporary records, a method which is eminently fallacious, especially when,

¹⁸ Sloane MS. 3662; Brit. Case, App i. 169; *U.S.C. Report*, i. 63-4, 175.

¹⁹ *Gesch. van de Colonien Essequibo, Demerary en Berbice*, 1888. Netscher has evidently not consulted the Sloane MS., where the name is spelt 'Gromwegele,' but the extracts published in Bronkhurst's *The Colony of British Guiana and its Labouring Population* (London, 1883), in which 'Gromweagle' is found. Netscher also (followed by Professor Burr) has blundered in saying that 'Gromwegele' is a corruption of the Dutch 'Groenewegel.' This is itself a misspelling of the real name of the commandeur 'Groenewegen.' The correct form appears repeatedly in the records of the colony, the incorrect only once in a minute dated 11 July 1658. The fact of his being a 'skipper' rests on no authority to be found in the Dutch archives.

²⁰ *U.S.C. Report*, i. 62-6, 172-5.

as in the present case, the contemporary records have to so large an extent disappeared. The single exception refers to Scott's statement about the duration of Groenewegen's governorship. Of this much will be said later; here it is sufficient to point out that the dictum of Netscher, followed by Professor Jameson and others, that Scott is here palpably wrong, because the records show that Groenewegen was *commundeur* from 1657 to 1665 or 1666, has been admitted by Professor Burr himself to be incorrect. From the additional evidence unearthed in the course of the Venezuelan boundary inquiry the last-named writer does not scruple to admit, with his usual fairness,²¹ that Scott has been proved to be right both in stating that Groenewegen was *commandeur* before 1657 and in placing the date of his death in 1664. The argument from silence is a treacherous weapon, liable at any moment to break in the hand of him that wields it.

Granting, then, that the presumption of credibility ought to be provisionally conceded to Scott, it is clear that such a presumption cannot but be greatly increased by a consideration of his sources of information. He himself tells us 'that he had the good fortune to meete with some injenious observacions of the former governor of what had been transacted in Guiana in his time, to whome the world is obliged for many particulars of this story.' Reference is here clearly to written memoranda by the hand of Groenewegen himself.²² In addition to this Scott must, after his conquest of the colony in 1665, have had personal intercourse with Groenewegen's son, who became *commandeur* in his father's place. Of the way in which the 'factors' Hendrickson and Matteson became his prisoners and companions on his voyage to Guiana, and how he used the opportunity to extract from their long and intimate acquaintance with the country and its inhabitants all facts that could serve as material for the account of that land, which it was his purpose to write, we have already spoken. With such first-hand sources to draw from as to the earlier history of the Dutch settlement on the Essequibo nothing but pure perversity and a desire to tell what was untrue, because it was untrue and to serve no purpose whatever, could have led Scott to speak of Groenewegen as the founder of the colony and as being associated with its fortunes throughout, unless this had been the case. The statement of Scott is, moreover, so full of what (in the supposition of a merely fictitious story) appear to be irrelevant and improbable details that it is not difficult, despite the lack of contemporary records, to find tests of his veracity.

²¹ *U.S.C. Report*, i. 175.

²² Scott translates 'out of the Nether Dutch,' and so was certainly acquainted with the language. His converse with Hendrickson and Matteson would most probably be in that tongue.

To do this the more effectually we will place ourselves in the position of Scott in 1665, and work backwards over Groenewegen's career from the known to the less known.

(1) *The Period 1645-1664.*

An absolute dearth of official information regarding the Essequibo colony for the decade 1647-57 confronts us, for the minutes of the proceedings both of the Nineteen²³ and of the Zeeland Chamber during this period are missing. In 1657, however, a new settlement was established on the Pomeroon by the three cities of Middelburg, Flushing, and Veere, under the auspices of the Zeeland chamber, and the minutes of the proceedings of the committee charged with the government of this settlement, styled 'Nova Zeelandia,' are extant. A minute under date 24 Dec. 1657²⁴ tells us of the appointment of a certain Cornelis Goliat as commissary, commandeur, and engineer to the new colony. Another, dated 24 Jan. 1658,²⁵ states—

There were read the drafted instructions for *Aert Adriaensen as Director*²⁶ and Cornelis Goliat as commissary;

and 2 Jan. 1659—

There was read a letter from the commandeur Aert Adriaensz Groenewegen and the commissary Goliat dated at New Middelburg 15 Sept. 1658.²⁷

On the evidence of these minutes, taken with that of a minute of the Zeeland chamber dated 20 Jan. 1667, dealing with a claim against Groenewegen's estate and mentioning that he had been succeeded as commandeur by his son,²⁸ who was in office when the colony was conquered by the English (*i.e.* by Scott), Netscher has, and with some show of reason, based his statement that Groenewegen was commandeur from 1657 to 1665 or 1666.

Now it will be noticed that the minutes above quoted do not record the appointment of Groenewegen as commandeur, and the underlined words in that of 24 Jan. 1658 seem to point to a distinction between him and Goliat other than that arising from inferiority of rank. Recent researches prove this to have been the case. A minute of the Zeeland chamber, 10 Jan. 1658, shows that Groenewegen had already for some time been commandeur before 10 Sept. 1657. It runs—

Jacob van den Heuvel requests the payment of the 100 pounds Flemish, in pursuance of the minutes of 20 Sept. 1657, for our commandeur in Essequibo, Aert Adriaensen, together with the accrued interest.²⁹

²³ The supreme council of the West India Company.

²⁴ Brit. C. App. i. 145.

²⁵ *Ibid.* i. 146; *U.S.C. Report*, ii. 128.

²⁶ Underlined in original.

²⁷ Brit. C. App. i. 148; *U.S.C. Report*, ii. 129.

²⁸ Netscher, *Gesch. van Essequibo*, p. 358.

²⁹ *U.S.C. Report*, ii. 129.

Another minute of 9 March 1671 carries us still further back.

Pieter Wollefrans appeared before the Chamber, and demanded payment of the fourth part of the sum of 563*fl.* 19 : 6 : being the balance of the account for the salary earned and deserved by Aert Adriaensen Groenewegen as commandeur in Essequibo from 6 Nov. 1650 to 19 Aug. 1664, date of his death, and therefore due to his heirs.³⁰

Here we find incontrovertible proof of the truth of Scott's assertion that Groenewegen died in 1664. We also find that arrears of salary were due to him from 1650. When in connexion with this last extract we take another dated 9 March, 1645—

After a vote had been taken it was resolved that the letter of Aert Adriaensen van Scherpenisse,³¹ commandeur at Fort Kijkoveral, in Rio Essequibo, mentioning

it must be granted, as Professor Burr has candidly admitted, that the case for the continuity of Groenewegen's tenure of office from the end of 1644 to August 1664 may be regarded as proven.

(2) *The Period 1616-1644.*

In Scott's account of the 'sixth colonie,' quoted above, a reference occurs to the early history of Barbados, to the following effect :—

And Barbadoes oweth its first assistance both for foode and trade to this man's (Gromwegle's) speciall kindness, anno 1627, at what time they were in a miserable condition.

It will be noticed that here is an incident introduced into the narrative of Groenewegen's career in Guiana, the mention of which would be quite inexplicable if untrue, but whose truth, if sustained by other evidence, will furnish a most convincing, because undesigned, test of the veracity of the writer. It does more. Just as in the account of the Pomeroon colony of 1650 the mention of Tobago led to an investigation of Scott's description of that island and the discovery of much additional matter of great interest bearing upon the subject, so is it in this case. Scott has also written a description of Barbados³² containing a number of facts and allusions concerning the neighbouring colony of Essequibo, and throwing light upon our knowledge of its early settlement both directly and indirectly. The first colonising of Barbados is thus told :—

In the year 1624 a ship of Sir William Curteen³³ a Merchant of London in her voyage from Brazile put into the roade since called the

³⁰ Brit. C. App. i. 172.

³¹ *U.S.C. Report*, ii. 129 (note). There are no data to explain why Groenewegen is here called 'Van Scherpenisse.' It was, however, extremely common for old families in Holland to bear such territorial additions. In this manner one branch was distinguished from another. Thus we find Adrian van Groenewegen van Bleiswijk.

³² Sloane MS. 3662. ³³ This name Courten is spelt variously Curteen, Curton, &c.

Austin's and after short stay sayled from thence, visiting all the Bayes on the West and Southerne parte of the Island, and finding the Lande to promise much of the nature of Brazile, and adorned with curious Prospects and stored with wild Hoggs. judged it worth especiall notice, particularly one Captⁿ Thomas Powell then in the same ship, who after their arrivall in England presented his observations to the then Earle of Pembroke a great lover of plantations. Thereupon the Earle by Permission of King James prepared a ship wth a hundred and 60 passengers who left England the 26 of January Anno 1625 and arrived in Barbados May ye second 1626 at w^{ch} time Powell entred upon and tooke possession of the Island in his Ma^{'ies} name, for the use of the Earle of Pembroke; after w^{ch} the said Captaine Thomas Powell remayned Governo^r on the Island and having understood the Dutch had a plantacion in the river Dissekeeb on the maine of Guiana, whose Gover^r one Gromwegle he was particularly knowne too, dispatched his sonne Thomas Powell to desier Cap^t Gromwegle to send him such things as were proper to plant for food & for Trade. The gentleman willing to gratifie an old ffrend (for Powell & Gromwegle had been comrades in the king of Spaines servis in the West Indies) perswades a Family of Arawacoes consisting of ffourty persons to attend Powell to Barbados to learne the English to plant, and to carry with them Casava, yams, Indian Corne and other pulses, Plantains, &c. . . .

A number of details follow having no relevance to Guiana, and then we come upon another curious passage of quite singular fullness about 'the Dissekeeb' and 'Captain Gromwegle,' which, slightly abbreviated, states that

Captain Hawley Anno 1628 was sent in the ship Carlisle to visit and supervise the Earl of Carlisle's affaires in those parts, who invited Captⁿ Powell and his secretary aboard and then clapt them into irons. . . . The Indians not likeing the change pressed their contract made between them and M^r Powell at Dissekeeb, which Captain Gromwegle had undertaken should be performed, i.e. that if they did not like the country they should be sent back at the expiration of two years with a reward of fifty pounds worth of axes, knives and other goods. . . . Anno 1631 one of these getting on board a Dutch ship got passage for Dissekeeb, wh^{ch} proved of all consequence to Captain Gromwegle, who had like to have lost his fort and Colony and for this cause only was forced to marry a woman of the Carib nation to balance the power of the Arawaks, and afterwards was at the charge of great presents to make up the business between the Dutch and the Arawak nation.

[*Note.*—In this same description of Barbados the following passage occurs:—

The sugar cane was brought to Barbados first by one Pieter Brower of North Holland from Brazil Anno 1637, but came to no considerable perfection till the year 1645, and so forward to the year 1652 at which time the Dutch by the great credit they gave the planters brought the island to its utmost perfection, when an Act of Parliament excluded the trade.

The name of Pieter Brower is here introduced as that of a man who was for many years known in connexion with the sugar industry (from 1637 to 1652) in Barbados. But this reference to him, like that to 'Captain Gromwegle' above, rests on the sole authority of Scott. Now it happens that among the very few references to the colony of Essequibo during the years 1647-57 is one by Colonel Modyford, the Cromwellian governor of Barbados at the time of the passing of the act referred to. Writing home upon the subject of colonisation in Guiana,³⁴ he remarks 'that the Dutch have already on two or three rivers built sugar works, one of them at Marawini, another at Essequike (Essequibo).' Comparing this with the petition of a certain Jan Doensen to the Zeeland chamber in 1664,³⁵ who asks that 'a certain piece of land of which he had taken possession at Browsershoek, in the river Essequibo, for the furtherance of a regular sugar-mill there, should be registered,' and seeing on the map that this Browsershoek is a point of land exactly opposite the Dutch fort and adjoining a stream called the Sugar Creek, there is a very high probability that it derived its name from the planter, who migrated from Barbados in consequence of Cromwell's legislation. This survival of his name and memory down to the time of Scott's conquest of Essequibo would account for the prominent place he gives him in his narrative.]

In reading these extracts it strikes one at once that the passages relating to 'Gromwegle' are full of detail, having little or no connexion with 'a description of Barbadoes.' Their presence is unaccountable on any other supposition than that which obviously suggests itself—i.e. that the story of Groenewegen's life, the particulars of which Scott had himself recently learnt in Guiana, had interested the writer and remained fresh in his memory. The main facts about the early history of Barbados³⁶ were, no doubt, gleaned from that 'examination of all the records' which Scott says he caused to be made 'during the time he was commander in the island.' It is difficult, however, to see how he could have known (for to suppose such a statement an invention is absurd) that Powell and Groenewegen were 'old friends and had been comrades in the king of Spaines servis in the West Indies,' unless he had been told it by some one well acquainted with the adventures of the old commandeur in his early days, or had found it set down in those 'ingenious observacions of the former Governor' to which he acknowledges his indebtedness.³⁷

³⁴ Record Office, *Calendar of State Papers*, Col. series, 1594-1660.

³⁵ *U.S.C. Report*, ii. 132.

³⁶ The general accuracy of Scott's 'description' can be tested by comparing it with another manuscript narrative of the end of the seventeenth century (Sloane MSS. Brit. Mus., 2441) entitled 'An account of His Majt^{ies} island of Barbados.'

³⁷ The information may have come from the younger Groenewegen or from

However this may be, the evidence³⁸ still existing as to the Englishman's visit to Essequibo is of a quite exceptional character—viz. the sworn depositions of Henry Powell himself in 1656 and 1660, and of his nephew John in 1660, as well as a petition of the former in 1647. In 1656 Henry Powell was called upon to give evidence concerning the expedition to Barbados before the commissioners of bankruptcy on behalf of the heirs and representatives of his old patron Sir W. Courten. He states in his deposition

that he landed about 40 people on Barbados from the William and John of London about Febr'y 20th 1626. being in the employ of William Courten and Company . . . at the end of a fortnight time this dep^t sailed to the maine upon the coast of Guayana and furnished himselfe with rootes, plantes, fowles, tobacco, seeds and other materialls together with thirty two Indians, which he carried to the said island for the plantinge thereof.³⁹

Before proceeding further it will be observed that this statement agrees in all essential respects with Scott's narrative, except that here there is no mention of 'Gromwegle's' assistance. This, however, is precisely what there would not be. William Courten died in 1636 a ruined man, and his heirs were for a long series of years engaged in lawsuits both in England and the United Provinces to compel the Dutch representative of the old firm of Courten & Co., Pieter Boudaan Courten, to refund a large sum of money, said to have been fraudulently appropriated by him in 1631. It is clear that the very last thing a witness on behalf of the plaintiffs would voluntarily admit would be this very fact that the Courten settlement in Barbados was indebted for help to a man at that time in the employment of the defendant.

To show how this might have been the case, and for the clear understanding of what is to follow, a few facts relating to the Courtens⁴⁰ must be placed before the reader. This family occupied a remarkable position in the commercial world of the early seventeenth century. By descent they were Flemings. The founder of their prosperity fled from Menin to London to avoid Alva's persecution, and there succeeded in establishing lucrative trade connexions with the Netherlands, and became a great merchant. His

Hendrickszoon, the Switzer, who may be identical with Jan Hendriksz Benckelaer, who went out first to the Essequibo as 'assistant' in 1628 (*U.S.C. Report*, ii. 56, 66). Benckelaer indicates a man of Bencken, in Switzerland. Scott can hardly have been personally acquainted with Powell, or he would not have named him 'Thomas' instead of 'Henry.'

³⁸ The first in date is found in the almost contemporary *True Travels, Adventures, and Observations of Captain John Smith*, published in 1630. Smith had just visited Barbados.

³⁹ Public Record Office, *State Papers*, Col. Series, xiv. no. 39.

⁴⁰ For the history of the Courten or Courteen family a rich store of material can be found in the Brit. Mus. Sloane MS. 3515, and in a lengthy notice in Kippis's *Biographia Britannica*.

two sons, William and Peter, followed in his steps. William in his youth acted as his father's agent, first at Courtray, then at Haarlem, where he married an heiress of the name of Crommelin. Peter, who never married, was agent at Middelburg. Their sister Margaret became the wife first of Matthias Boudaan, of Rotterdam, then of John Money, a London merchant. In 1606, on the death of the elder Courten, the brothers entered into partnership with John Money, and formed a firm known as Courten & Company. William settled in London and became a naturalised Englishman, but Peter continued to live in Zeeland. The company was thus Anglo-Dutch; but the Dutch element was predominant, for the books were not kept at London, but at Middelburg, where Peter Boudaan⁴¹ acted as his uncle's bookkeeper and manager, and looked after the interests of a quite cosmopolitan business. The firm, then, which despatched the expedition to Barbados in 1626 had as one of its partners a man who, as the Dutch records of that date show, had been for years a pioneer in the West India trade, and was, at the very time when this first planting of Barbados was being planned, serving as a director of the Dutch West India Company on a committee of the Zeeland chamber for considering the distribution of additional colonists on the Guiana rivers, the Amazon, the Wiacopo, and the Essequibo.⁴²

Scott states that both before and after 1626-7 Groenewegen was the head of a Dutch settlement on the Essequibo. If this were the case his presence there must have been known to and had the sanction of such a committee. It will be shown later that in all probability he was the chief factor of a private company of Zeeland merchants, one of whom was Peter Courten himself.

In that portion of his deposition of 1656 already quoted Powell states that he landed in Barbados in a ship named the 'William and John,' and that in a fortnight he sailed to the Essequibo to obtain the necessaries he required for the new settlement. Later on he proceeds to say that his brother John landed from England in the ship the 'Pieter'⁴³ about forty-eight hours after his return. The fact that the one vessel bears the names of the two English partners, the other of the Dutch one, of itself suggests a Dutch partnership in the venture. This, however, is rendered practically certain by an examination of the evidence contained in some further depositions of the Powells preserved in the Bodleian Library.⁴⁴

⁴¹ Known later as Pieter Boudaan Courten, son of Matthias Boudaan and Margaret Courten.

⁴² Brit. C. App. i. 62. Both the uncle and nephew are named together in these minutes, a proof surely that at this time they had some exceptional interest in the Guiana trade.

⁴³ The Dutch form of the name is in the original manuscript.

⁴⁴ MSS. Rawlinson C. 94. Transcripts were kindly furnished me by Mr. F. Madan, the sub-librarian.

In a petition of Henry Powell in 1660 to the then governor and council of Barbados about certain of the Guiana Indians, who had been kept in slavery, the old commander of the 'John and William' gives an account of his expedition of 1626. He there states that among those who bore the cost and charge of the voyage was 'Sir Peter Courten,'⁴⁵ and his narrative leaves little doubt as to the share of the Dutchman in the undertaking. Powell tells first of his landing some forty men or more in Barbados, and these, as he avers distinctly in a sworn deposition of 1647, were 'for Sir William Courten, and Sir William paid them wages.'⁴⁶ Then in his petition he goes on—

Having lefte the aforesaid servants upon this Iland I proceeded in my voyage to the Maine to the river of Disacaba, and there I lefte eight men and lefte them a Cargezon of trade for that place.

From this it is clear that the continuation of the voyage to the mainland was part of the original plan,⁴⁷ and that its purpose was to leave eight men there with a cargezon of trade. The fact that 'cargezon' is the technical Dutch word for goods sent out to a trading port for bartering with Indians⁴⁸ makes it wellnigh certain that these eight men (who would never have been abandoned alone on an unknown and inhospitable coast, among wild Indian tribes, some of whom were reputed to be cannibals) were despatched by Peter Courten as a reinforcement to the Zeeland trading settlement, whose head, we are assuming, was Groenewegen. When we combine this statement of Powell with the narrative of Scott all becomes plain sailing and intelligible. The visit to the mainland, made so quickly (only a fortnight) after landing at Barbados, had been all prearranged, the English skipper being charged to convey some fresh settlers and a cargezon of goods to his old friend the Dutch factor, while he in return received a supply of roots, seeds, and materials for the new plantation on the island, as well as a number of Indians, skilled in cultivation, and already, through

⁴⁵ Fol. 33.

⁴⁶ Fol. 13.

⁴⁷ Fol. 32. A sworn deposition of John Powell, jun., in 1660 'concerning the right of William Courten, son of Sir W. Courten, to the island of Barbados' explains the discrepancy in dates between Scott and Henry Powell. From him it appears that an abortive expedition started in 1625, and that his father, John Powell, with his ship 'Peter' and pinnace 'Thomasine,' landed in May 1627. May not the name of the pinnace account for Scott's slip in calling Powell 'Thomas' instead of 'Henry'?

⁴⁸ The following extract from the minutes of the proceedings of the Zeeland Chamber for 26 Nov. 1626 exactly illustrates my argument (Brit. C. App. i. 62): 'De commissarisen over de goederen werden geautoriseert een bequaem cargezoen te fornieren voor het jacht "Arnemnyden." Is geresolveert met het voorsjacht "Arnemuyden" te zenden 20 aencommende jongens om die te landen in de Amazonas Wiacopo of Isekepe (Essequibo) daer het volc van onse camer zonde mogen gevonden worden.' In the next minute, 3 Dec. 1626, Messrs. Boudaan, Courten, and de Moor are authorised to give instructions as to locating these colonists. See also Brit. C. App. i. 129.

several years' peaceful intercourse, friendly to the white man. Such things are not picked up haphazard on a savage coast.

Before leaving 'the description of Barbados' one or two other points claim our attention. The first is the extraordinary statement that Groenewegen, because of the dissatisfaction caused among the Arawaks by the treatment their kinsfolk above named had received at the hands of Lord Carlisle's officers, had married a woman of the rival Carib race. The reason is given that he wished to secure the friendship of the Caribs as a counterpoise to the resentment of the Arawaks, though it is added that by means of large presents he was able 'to make up the business.' Here again we have a positive statement, which could scarcely be an invention. There can be assigned no rational motive why Scott should make an assertion in itself so improbable, and one which could have been so easily disproved. Corroboration, however, is not wanting. The records of the colony tell us that Amos van Groenewegen, who was postholder of Demarara during the last decades of the century, was the son of Aert Adriaansz van Groenewegen by an Indian mother.⁴⁹ To find this half-breed son of the old commandeur bear the honourable patronymic 'van Groenewegen' would of itself indicate that he was recognised by his father as his lawful offspring. That marriages, at the very time to which Scott refers, did take place between prominent Dutchmen and Carib women is proved by a despatch from the *cabildo* of Trinidad to the king of Spain, dated 27 Dec. 1637. In this despatch the writers state—

The Dutch threaten this island of Trinidad with a powerful fleet and are in league with the numerous Indian tribes . . . the Dutch being so mixed with the Indians that they marry with the Indian Carib women, as well as with those of other tribes.⁵⁰

The dealings of Groenewegen (according to Scott) with the Indians generally, and the Arawaks in particular, may be illustrated by the following quotations from Spanish despatches of 1637 :—

It is known from Arawak Indians . . . that they also receive bribes from the Dutch and have trade and intercourse with them.⁵¹

The Indians frequent them very willingly for the sake of the considerable articles of barter they (the Dutch) give them.⁵²

With many gifts of articles of barter and clothing they (the Dutch) hold all the country on their side.⁵³

A number of similar extracts from contemporary documents might be given, but these are sufficient to show that Scott gives a true picture of the relations of the Dutch with the natives at this period. The inference can only be that he had access to authentic

⁴⁹ Brit. Counter-C. App. pp. 55, 76, &c. ; Netscher, *Geschied. v. Essequibo*, p. 738.

⁵⁰ Brit. C. App. i. 88.

⁵¹ *Ibid.* i. 101.

⁵² *Ibid.* i. 107.

⁵³ *Ibid.* i. 115.

sources of information, and further that from these was also derived all that he has to tell us as to the leading part played by Groenewegen in 1627 and the years following.

Let us now turn our attention to the period preceding the Barbados incident. 'The Courtens,' says Kippis,⁵⁴ 'traded very extensively to Guinea, Portugal, Spain, and the West Indies.' We may then safely infer that among the many vessels hailing from Dutch ports which entered the king of Spain's service as carriers of salt from Punto de Arraya, in Venezuela, for European consumption there would be some during the twelve years' truce from a firm which already had an English as well as a Dutch nationality and strong Flemish ties.⁵⁵ Nothing then would be more natural than for two youthful adventurers, like Groenewegen and Powell, to have served together during the first years of the truce in a Courten vessel under the Spanish flag, and then for the former (who came of a catholic stock) to have been tempted by good pay to remain on the Orinoco as the Indian factor of the Spanish authorities at Santo Thomé, in a similar position to that occupied in 1665 by Scott's prisoner Matteson. While at Santo Thomé his travels among the Indians would lead to his becoming acquainted with the possibilities of the Essequibo at its point of junction with the Cuyuni and Mazaruni as a centre of trade; and hearing that certain Dutch merchants had attempted to make a settlement lower down the coast, but had failed,⁵⁶ he resolved in 1615 to desert the Spaniard and to offer his services and his newly acquired knowledge of the district and its inhabitants to his own country and old employers. All this sounds quite reasonable, and may, indeed, be said to represent a sequence of events quite likely to have occurred.

Scott does not here tell a tale in any way incredible. Assuming then for the nonce that Groenewegen did thus return home, possibly in one of the salt ships referred to, let us next examine the records of the time, and see whether he would on his arrival find the state of affairs propitious for carrying out his project. We shall discover that at no other period in Dutch history was there such intense eagerness among the people of Holland and Zeeland for pushing commercial enterprise in every part of the globe.

The East India Company, whose charter dated from 1603, had already established factories in India, Ceylon, the Indian Archi-

⁵⁴ *Biograph. Brit.* under 'Courteen.'

⁵⁵ They had places of business at Courtray, Menin, and elsewhere in the Spanish Netherlands. A petition to the states-general in 1603 (?), probably written by the well-known Willem Usselinx, shows that the first proposals for Dutch colonisation in Guiana were connected with the salt trade from Punto de Arraya (*Brit. C. App. i.* 22-7; *Brit. Counter-C. App.* pp. 3, 4).

⁵⁶ Compare *Brit. C. App.* pp. 39, 40, 42 with p. 169. The attempts to colonise on Cayenne and the Wiacopo appear to have collapsed precisely in 1615.

pelago, China, and Japan, and the conquest of Java had begun. Dutch ships had sailed round Cape Hoorn, others had penetrated far into the Arctic Regions, others again had found their way to New Guinea and the Australian continent. There seemed no limit to the spirit of adventure in search of fresh outlets for trade. Repeated efforts had already been made to erect a West India Company, on the same lines as that which had been so successful in the east, but for political reasons this was not accomplished until the close of the twelve years' truce in 1621. Nevertheless in 1614 we find the states-general and the states of Holland openly encouraging discovery and settlement in new lands by the offer of temporary trade monopolies, and both from Spanish and Dutch sources we learn that attempts at colonisation ⁵⁶ had been made at several points on the Guiana coast in 1613 and 1614, and we further find these early efforts specially connected with the name of the well-known burgomaster of Flushing, the great merchant Jan de Moor.⁵⁷

The year 1614 also gave birth to two companies, the Northern (Noordsche) Company, for carrying on the whale fishery in the northern seas, and the first New Netherland Company, for effecting a settlement on the newly discovered Hudson River in North America. These companies had a close relation one with the other, and the known facts connected with their early history, when compared with the known facts concerning the Essequibo colony after 1626, will enable us to draw certain inferences and to arrive at certain conclusions of the highest historical probability concerning the beginnings of the last-named colony.

The points connected with the New Netherland Company to which I wish to draw particular attention are these: It came into existence six months ⁵⁸ after the Northern Company, and its promoters were almost all of them directors of the Amsterdam chamber of that company. The closeness of the two companies' relations afterwards is shown by the fact that the skippers Block and May, who made most of the early trips to New Netherland, served in the whaling fleets of the Northern Company in alternate voyages. In 1621 New Netherland fell within the limits of the charter of the newly created West India Company, but the Amsterdam chamber was able to maintain its old exclusive rights, so that when in 1622 a fresh New Netherland Company replaced that of 1614 those who furnished the bulk of the capital were leading directors of the Amsterdam chamber of the West India Company. It is to be noted that during the existence of the first company not a single colonist, properly so called, was sent to New Netherland; 'factors'

⁵⁷ *Nederl. Jaerboeken*, August 1751, ii. 1085; Zeeland Adm. Minutes, 18 July 1618; *U.S.C. Report*, i. 158, 161, 169.

⁵⁸ 27 March and 11 Oct.

only were maintained in defensible posts for bartering and trading with the natives, and, though the settlement had been in existence since 1614, not till 1624 was an official governor of the colony, representing the company, appointed in the person of a certain Pieter Minuit.⁵⁹

In the Northern Company the chambers of Amsterdam and of Zeeland were from the first in strong rivalry.⁶⁰ Each chamber accordingly, for the sake of peace, had its own depôts and fishing preserves, the headquarters of the Zeelanders being on the north-eastern end of Spitzbergen, at a spot named by them 'De Zeeuwsche Uitkijk,' i.e. the Zeelander's Outlook. The two leading directors of the Zeeland chamber were Jan de Moor and Pieter Courten, men like-minded in the boldness and variety of their trading ventures, and who were now perhaps trying to recoup themselves for failures in the West Indies by lucrative returns from the whaling industry. Their hopes, however, were for the moment dashed, this time not by Spanish but by English opposition. Their quiet occupation of the 'Zeeuwsche Uitkijk' was disputed by King James, who in 1616 sent out eight large ships and two pinnaces to defend what he considered to be his prior rights to the fishery.⁶¹ In consequence of this armed interference but few Zeelanders put in an appearance in the northern seas during this season.⁶²

According to Scott this is the precise time when Groenewegen returned home from the Orinoco to tell from his personal knowledge of the advantages of the Essequibo for a trading settlement, and to offer his own experienced services for the conduct of an expedition to that river. We can well imagine that Zeeland merchants, like De Moor and Courten, already pioneers in the West Indian trade, should have readily opened their ears, and, at a time when their joint enterprise in the Spitzbergen waters was temporarily hindered, should have seized the chance of emulating on this unoccupied South American littoral that which their rivals

⁵⁹ W. E. J. Berg, *Bijdragen tot de Geschiedenis onzer Kolonisatie in Noord Amerika*, in the 'Gids,' 1848, pp. 538-51.

⁶⁰ A single instance of the continuous jealousy and opposition of the provinces of Holland and Zeeland throughout the seventeenth century.

⁶¹ For details see Muller, *Geschiedenis van d. Noordsche Compagnie*; Zorgdrager, *Groenlandsche Visscherij*.

⁶² In a memorial presented in 1618 to James I by the Muscovy Company, protesting against the injuries done to them by the Dutch, the following passage shows that at that date the fishery dispute had again reached an acute stage. It is very interesting from the light it throws on the character of the Courten firm. 'Les deux navires susd' de Middleburgh appartient à Pierre Courtin, demeurant audict lieu et Guillaume Courtin de Meurant à Londres, qui sont freres, confors ence voyage de Grenelande qu'en le tout reste de leur traffiq, ainsi que led' Guillaume Courtin a luy meme confesse et les maistres, aussi de leurs navires en Grenelande disans que ce leur estoit tout un de mener la charge diceulx à Middleburgh ou à Londres parceque les proprietaires diceulx demouroyent en l'un et l'autre lieu' (*Verbaal der Ambassade*, 1618-9).

of Amsterdam were already achieving on the banks of the Hudson in the north. Everything that can be gleaned from the records of the time tends, in fact, to confirm the probability and substantial accuracy of Scott's narrative. Guided by the analogy of New Netherland, it is not difficult to understand exactly what took place on the Wild Coast⁶³ of Guiana. The description given by Groenewegen of the position of the little island, on which he proposed to establish a trading post, commandingly situated, as it was, at the point of confluence of the main estuary of the Essequibo, with its three great inland tributaries, offering, as it did, by these waterways splendid facilities for traffic with the natives, while at the same time screened by its distance (thirty leagues) from attack from the sea, could not fail to win to his project the support of his old patrons. The acquaintance with such a spot proves that the leader of the earliest expedition to Kijkoveral, as the island was fitly called, must have had some such previous career⁶⁴ as that of Groenewegen (according to Scott), and the name given to it by the new comers, recalling as it does the 'Uitkijk'⁶⁵ where some of them had possibly spent the previous summer engaged in whale fishing, affords another piece of confirmatory evidence as to the date, slight indeed, but cumulative.

With the erection of the West India Company in 1621, here as in New Netherland, we may believe a change was wrought. The private trading establishment continued, but it henceforth became the appendage of a regular colony under the Zeeland chamber. The records of the actual beginning of this colony have indeed disappeared, but we learn that a certain Jan Adriaanszoon van der Goes became its first commandeur in 1624,⁶⁶ the same year that Minuit was appointed first governor of New Netherland. But the colony, we hold, did not do away with the private trading establishment; they went on side by side, the former under the Zeeland chamber's commandeurs, the latter under the old chief factor Groenewegen, until under changed circumstances in 1644 he at last became himself the official head of the colony.

We will endeavour to substantiate this at present hypothetical statement, step by step, from the various authorities (and they unfortunately are very meagre) which throw any light upon the subject. The only official records of the Essequibo colony earlier

⁶³ The Dutch name for the whole coast between the Amazon and the Orinoco, but more particularly applied to the western portion.

⁶⁴ The strong traditions to the effect that the Dutch fort at Kijkoveral stood on the site of an older fort (reputed Portuguese) is probably true. These ruins no doubt attracted Groenewegen's attention when in Spanish service he first penetrated among the Indian tribes of the interior. Hartsinck, *Beschryving van Guiana*, i. 207, 208, 262; *U.S.C. Report*, i. 185-6.

⁶⁵ 'Kijkoveral' = look-everywhere; 'Uitkijk' = look-out.

⁶⁶ *Brit. C. App.* i. 63.

than 1657 are to be found in the minutes of the proceedings of the Zeeland chamber of the West India Company, which are extant for the twenty years 1626-46. The minute of 23 Aug. 1627, 'It was resolved to raise the wages of Jan van der Goes in Essequibo after his first three years,' carries us back to 1624, but no further. The minutes of the proceedings of the Nineteen (the Supreme Council of the West India Company) are unfortunately all lost, save those for 1623-4.

The existence of a settlement on the Essequibo before 1624 is, however, proved by the following evidence.

In the middle of the eighteenth century a dispute arose as to the exclusive rights of trading on the Essequibo, which the Zeelanders claimed. In the autumn of 1750 the provincial estates of Zeeland set forth their case in a lengthy report. In this they state

that this colony (of Essequibo) was already known and frequented by the Zeeland chamber at the time of the granting of the charter in 1621, as is shown by the old books and registers, and among others a journal of 1627.⁶⁷

About a year later we find the directors of the Zeeland chamber⁶⁸ asserting that

- (1) The first author and founder of this colony has hitherto not been by name rightly known.
- (2) A certain memorial was presented by the Heer Jan de Moor in 1639 to the assembly of Nineteen, from which it appears that the colonies on the Wild Coast (Guiana) in the year 1613, eight years before the charter, were already in existence.
- (3) There is evidence in the then extant books, registers, and minutes of the company that an establishment on the river,⁶⁹ guarded by a fort, was already in existence when the West India Company was erected.
- (4) The early (but unknown) founders of the first settlement must have been members of the later Zeeland chamber of the West India Company.

The statement made by Jan de Moor in the above-named memorandum of 1639 is confirmed from Spanish sources, which conclusively show that the Dutch began to make settlements on the Guiana coast in 1613-1615.⁷⁰ It appears from the Zeeland admiralty minutes of 18 July 1618 that *Jan de Moor and his partners* asked permission to arm their ships engaged in the West Indian trade, and permission was granted under the condition that such arms be used only in self-defence.⁷¹ In the following year

⁶⁷ Kok's *Vaderlandsch Woordenboek*, xiv. 404. This proves the existence in 1750 of authorities, since lost.

⁶⁸ *Nederl. Jaerboeken*, ii. 1085-6.

⁶⁹ Essequibo.

⁷⁰ Brit. C. App. i. 36-8, 41.

⁷¹ *U.S.C. Rep.* i. 158; Zeeland Adm. Min., 18 July 1618,

the Spaniard Geronimo de Grados, sent from Santo Thomé to reduce the Indians to obedience, was taken prisoner in the Essequibo by six Dutch and English ships.⁷²

In his 'Apologie for his Voyage to Guiana' ⁷³ Raleigh, after mentioning that he had sent some boats into the Essequibo in search of pilots for the Orinoco, proceeds—

In a letter of the Governours to the King of Spaine of the eighth of July he not only complaineth that the Guianians are in arms against him, but that even those Indians, which under their noses live, doe in despite of all the Kings edicts trade with Los Flamnicos & Engleses enemigos (with the Flemish and English enemies).

Surely here the Spanish governor's testimony ⁷⁴ proves that there must have been in 1617 a Dutch trading post sufficiently near the Orinoco to tamper with the Indian tribes of that district. If Raleigh does not mention that his boats visited such a post, it was because that post was, as Scott relates, on an island thirty leagues up a stream of most difficult and intricate navigation, and native pilots would naturally be found in the creeks ⁷⁵ close to the mouth.

It has already been mentioned that at a meeting of the directors of the Zeeland chamber, 23 Aug. 1627,⁷⁶ 'it was resolved to raise the wages of Jan van der Goes in Essequibo after his first three years.' This first official governor, then, of the company's colony on the Essequibo may be taken to have begun his duties not earlier than the end of August 1624. Now it happens that the journal of a voyage made by a ship named the 'Pigeon' in 1623-4, under the sanction of the directors of the West India Company, for the purpose of visiting the Amazon and the rivers of the wild coast of Guiana, exists in the British Museum.⁷⁷ The manuscript contains also charts of each of the rivers entered, with the course of the vessel and place of anchorage carefully marked. A fortnight, 12 Aug. to 28 Aug. 1624, was spent in the Essequibo, and merchandise was brought away. The narrative is of the briefest, and no details are given, but the accompanying chart places the anchorage exactly before the small island, where (according to Scott) Groenewegen and his companions had established themselves in 1616. The length of time spent by the 'Pigeon' in the river, the distance to which it penetrated by a difficult and tortuous channel, and the merchandise which was shipped are facts which all tend to corroborate Scott's story.

The presence, then, of a settlement at Kijkoveral for some eight

⁷² Brit. C. p. 24. These Dutch ships were, no doubt, those of Jan de Moor and his partners.

⁷³ *Essays and Observations*, p. 56.

⁷⁴ Note the prominence given to the word 'Flamnicos.'

⁷⁵ The smaller streams running into the Essequibo are called 'creeks' locally.

⁷⁶ Brit. C. App. i. 63.

⁷⁷ Sloane MS. 179 B.

years before 1624 under private auspices can scarcely admit of reasonable doubt, but the assumption made above that the foundation of the official colony caused no interruption in the existence of this private trading venture remains to be verified. The analogy of New Netherland and the facts adduced in connexion with the Barbados incident in 1627 lend it probability, but nothing more. As a preliminary, however, to the examination of the further evidence bearing on the question, a misconception must be cleared away. In the Venezuelan Boundary Arbitration case the condition and extent of Dutch settlement upon the Essequibo and its dependent rivers before the treaty of Münster in 1648 was the subject of elaborate arguments, written and spoken, but it is not too much to say that all of these, more particularly those of the advocates of the Venezuelan (Spanish) claims, were vitiated by the failure to recognise this existence, side by side, of two settlements. The evidence that has been mainly relied upon is that contained in the minutes of the proceedings of the Zeeland chamber, but the deductions that have been made from this evidence are fallacious, because of a fundamental misunderstanding of its bearing and limitations. The minutes have reference solely to the affairs of the company and of the officers and servants in the pay of the directors of the Zeeland chamber, the colonists in the strict official sense of the word. This can be easily demonstrated. An examination of contemporary Spanish evidence shows with quite overwhelming conclusiveness that at the very time the 'colony' was, according to the minutes, at its lowest ebb, Dutch enterprise in the Essequibo district was actually extending itself far and wide and threatening to drive the Spaniards from the Orinoco.

The minutes of the Zeeland chamber for the proceedings of 17 Aug. 1637⁷⁸ contain the following:—

Inasmuch as Jan van der Goes had written from Essequibo that he, with the folk⁷⁹ that were with him, was minded to come home by the first ship, it was some time ago resolved to send thither in the place of the said Van der Goes, by the ship 'De Jager,' Cornelis Pietersz Hose; and on account of the great demoralisation⁸⁰ of the folk and their wish to come home it is resolved that they be allowed to come home, and the colony provided anew with twenty-five other respectable persons, from whom the company may receive more service, and more edifyingly withal.

Yet at this very time, when the colony was denuded of the company's colonists—*i.e.* during the autumn of 1637—we find from the reports of the Spanish governor that successful attacks were made by the Dutch of Essequibo on Trinidad and on Santo Thomé itself. In a despatch, dated 17 Nov. 1637,⁸¹ we read—

⁷⁸ *U.S.C. Rep.* ii. 72.

⁷⁹ 'Het volck' = those in the pay of the Zeeland chamber. See *Brit. C. App.* i. 64, 'coloniers ofte volck.'

⁸⁰ Debauch.

⁸¹ *Brit. C. App.* i. 91.

In those three settlements of Amacuro, Essequibo, and Berbis the enemy have many people, especially in those of Essequibo and Berbis; he could not say what was the number of their force except that it was large, and that all the Aruacas and Caribs were allied with them.

In another despatch, of 28 May 1637,⁸² the governor speaks of Essequibo, a fort lying in his province of Guyana, where the Dutch were carrying on a great trade with the Indians, and were keeping the inhabitants of Orinoco in continual alarm.

Enclosed in a despatch dated 11 April 1637 is a letter from the *cabildo* of Santo Thomé; in this the statement occurs—

The forces of the enemy have increased in this government (Guyana) on the mainland, with new settlements among the Carib and Aruac nations, who are allied with them, and they are settled on the River Essequibo, which is 20 leagues to windward of this River Orinoco, on the same mainland coast, with two forts well supplied with artillery and soldiers and a quantity of negroes . . . their correspondence and traffic (with the Indians) reach such a height that they pass above this town through the hands of the natives, and sometimes the Dutch come with them. . . .⁸³

The condition of things revealed in these Spanish extracts would be in absolute contradiction to that represented in the minute of the Zeeland chamber, unless we assume that this extraordinary activity of the Dutch in Western Guiana represented the successful efforts of some capable agent of private enterprise. It was not Van der Goes and his demoralised 'folk' who kept the inhabitants of Orinoco in continual alarm, and carried their correspondence and traffic by the hands of the Indians far up the great river, but the man of whom Scott tells us that he

was the first man that took firme foteing on Guiana by the good likeing of the natives, whose humours the gent' perfectly understood. . . All his time the Colonie flourished; he managed a great trade with the Spaniards by the Indians with great secrecy.

The fact, moreover, that private enterprise was permitted to take part in the development of the Essequibo colony at this time does not rest on inference alone. The Zeeland chamber had indeed no desire to have their monopoly infringed, and a minute of their proceedings for 23 June 1635 records that a deputation was sent to the Supreme Council of Nineteen

to insist on the trade on the Wild Coast, and that nobody navigate there save those who have a contract to that effect from this chamber with the

⁸² Brit. C. App. i. 86.

⁸³ *Ibid.* i. 109. It should be noted that the 'cabildo' speak here of two forts on the Essequibo ('dos castillos bien guarnecidos'). In another letter of the following year, 1638, telling of the destruction of Santo Thomé by the Dutch, we find 'they have another settlement in Essequibo, where they have forts' (p. 115). This second fort is probably referred to in a minute of the proceedings of the Zeeland chamber for 23 Aug. 1627, p. 63.

approval of the Council of Nineteen, those being excepted who have such interests there as the councillor De Moor and company, but without anybody further being at liberty to navigate there.⁸⁴

And on 24 April 1636

there was read and adopted the letter for Essequibo to Jan de Moor and others.⁸⁴

To Councillor de Moor and company, then, liberty of trading was permitted, to the exclusion of all other private persons, and the privilege still existed nine years later, when the period of the charter⁸⁵ of the first West India Company was drawing to a close, for in the minutes of the proceedings of the Zeeland chamber for 29 May 1645 we find,

the commissioners are of opinion that the River Essequibo has now for some time been navigated with small profit to the company, for the reason that private colonists are permitted to trade there as well as the company, so that the goods coming from there cannot fetch their proper price on account of competition; they are, moreover, of opinion that at the expiration of the charter either the trade ought to be reserved exclusively for the company or it were better the aforesaid place should be thrown open under payment of proper dues.⁸⁶

This expression of petulance was, no doubt, owing to two separate causes—(1) the heavy strain upon the company's resources caused by the Portuguese revolt in Brazil; (2) the recent death of Jan de Moor. The private company of which this great merchant had so long been the head had now passed into other hands, and his old servant Groenewegen had, as the proceedings of 9 March 1645 inform us, recently become commandeur under the Zeeland chamber.⁸⁷ Scott's statement, however, that in 1665 he took prisoner in Essequibo

one Hendricson⁸⁸ a Switz by Nation that had served some Dutch Merchants in those parts 27 yeares in Quallity of a Factor with the upland Indians is a proof that the wish of the Zeeland chamber to have a monopoly remained ungratified.

If Scott's narrative be trustworthy, this private trading company began its operations in 1616, and it has already been pointed out that, just as the early New Netherland Company was an offshoot of the Amsterdam chamber of the Northern (Greenland fishery) Company, so in all probability did this early Essequibo Company take its rise out of the Zeeland chamber of this same

⁸⁴ *U.S.C. Rep.* ii. 70.

⁸⁵ The charter was for twenty-five years, from 1621 to 1646.

⁸⁶ *Brit. C. App.* i. 131.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.* See above, p. 655.

⁸⁸ This man must have gone out in 1637, the year in which we learn from Spanish sources of the great extension of Dutch trading among the inland Indians. We find him mentioned in Gen. Byam's narrative of the loss of Paramaribo (Sloane MS. 3662): 'One younker Hendryck, a Switts, [was sent] to still the Indians,' August 1665.

Northern Company. About the chief promoter and patron of the Essequibo expedition there can be no question; all the evidence points to Jan de Moor, and with him there is at least very considerable probability that, among others, Peter Courten was associated. Their names appear as the leading directors of the Zeeland chamber of the Northern Company in 1615, and among the earliest minutes that are extant of the proceedings of the Zeeland chamber of the West India Company in its relations with the Wild Coast of Guiana we find them once more joined together.

The minutes of 3 Dec. 1626 and of 22 April and 5 July 1627 exhibit (as we have already seen) the name of Burgomaster de Moor, coupled with those of Boudaan and Courten, as a committee of the Zeeland chamber to deal with certain matters relating to Guiana colonisation.⁸⁹ That the names of both the uncle and nephew should appear is a proof of the large interest they must have had in such undertakings. On the death of Peter Courten in 1630, unmarried, Boudaan became his heir, assumed the name of Courten, and at once took possession of all the books, goods, shipping, and money at Middelburg, to the utter loss and ruin of his uncle William, whose heirs were still endeavouring thirty years later to obtain legal redress in the law courts. The influential position of this man, as a leading director of the Zeeland chamber interested in the Guiana trade, may be gauged by the facts that two of his sons-in-law,⁹⁰ Jan van der Merct and Abraham Bischoep, were likewise directors of the Zeeland chamber, and that both served on special committees dealing with the affairs of Essequibo.⁹¹ Probably all three had in their private capacity a share in the fortunes of De Moor & Co.

However this may be, the existence of such a company must be conceded, and, further, we believe that the Spanish documents of 1637 and 1638, to which reference has already been made, contain an account not merely of its flourishing condition but of its powers for aggressive action. It has been pointed out that at the very time when the official colony was at its lowest ebb, Dutch traders had gained the confidence and alliance of all the Indian tribes, had established themselves at the mouth of the Amacuro, and were steadily pressing inland.⁹² In 1637 they found themselves threatened by the action of Don Diego Lopez de Escobar, the Spanish governor. The Spaniards from Santo Thomé and Trinidad had under his command attacked and utterly destroyed Jan de Moor's colony on the island of Tobago, and had carried off a number of prisoners, and among these Cornelis

⁸⁹ Brit. C. App. i. 62, 63. Compare above, pp. 659, 660 n. 49.

⁹⁰ Kok, *Vaderlandsch Woordenboek*, vii. 884.

⁹¹ *U.S.C. Rep.* ii. 64, 67, 78; Minutes of Zeeland Chamber for 24 Oct. 1630, 7 Apr. 1631, 24 June 1632, 16 July 1632.

⁹² Brit. C. App. i. 104, 110.

de Moor, the son of the patron.⁹³ In such circumstances what could be more natural than that De Moor's Essequibo settlers and traders should feel alarmed for their own safety, and should take vigorous measures to avenge the overthrow of Tobago and the capture of their patron's son?

A series of Spanish despatches⁹⁴ describe in detail how for this purpose a large force of Dutch and Indians made their way up the Orinoco, and on 22 July 1638 carried the town of Santo Thomé by storm, and then sacked and burnt it. The Spanish governor himself, to use the words of a letter from the *cabildo* of Guiana, 'escaped by a miracle.'⁹⁵ On the following 14 Oct. the Dutch and their allies were again successful in surprising the town of San Joseph de Oruña, in Trinidad, which they likewise plundered and burnt. Among the many documents in which these events are told the letter from the *cabildo* of Guiana is specially interesting, for it contains the name of the Dutch leader. It was drawn up and signed in Feb. 1638 by the eight members of the *cabildo* in the presence of the public notary, and was forwarded by special messenger, together with a letter from Escobar to the Spanish governor at Caracas, by whom certified copies were duly sent to the king.⁹⁶ Its authority therefore is unexceptionable. In this letter the following passages occur:—

The captain who has done these things [at Santo Thomé] is called Captain Llanes, who speaks the Carib and Aruaca languages⁹⁷ well. . . . Immediately this war was finished the same fleet of pirogues⁹⁸ took supplies of food at the Amacuro, a river which is at the east entrance of the Orinoco. From thence the said Captain Llanes⁹⁹ passed to Trinidad, where the same thing happened an hour before daybreak.

Who then was this formidable Captain 'Llanes,' who spoke the Indian tongues so well? The information about the Dutch and their doings appears to have been chiefly derived from Spanish-speaking Indian prisoners, and particularly from a man named Andrés, captured by the Dutch at Santo Thomé, who was afterwards compelled to serve as a guide, but who effected his escape during the assault on San Joseph de Oruña. It is scarcely possible not to

⁹³ A full account is given by one of the prisoners, Jacques Ousiel (Brit. C. App. i. 83-8). The destruction of this colony has already been mentioned above, p. 643).

⁹⁴ Brit. C. App. i. 88-114.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.* i. 103: 'fue milagro escapar el Senor Gobernador.'

⁹⁶ *Ibid.* i. 100-4.

⁹⁷ 'Gran lenguas de caribe y aruaca.'

⁹⁸ 'Pirogues' = Indian boats.

⁹⁹ The record of this name does not rest solely on this document. In a report by Major Maldonado, who was sent with a body of troops from Granada to restore Spanish authority in the Orinoco district, written perhaps in 1639, the writer refers to General Llanes as a well-known personage, 'en tiempo de Don Diego Lopez de Escobar el general Llanes quemando la ciudad . . .' Brit. C. App. i. 125 (where there is a slight mistranslation here).

recognise in the word 'Llanes' the transformation,¹⁰⁰ after passing from Dutch into Indian and from Indian into Spanish, of the well-known patronymic 'Adriaensz,' by which Groenewegen was familiarly known among his countrymen.¹⁰¹

It is noteworthy that in the minutes of the proceedings of the Zeeland chamber no allusion of any kind is made to these important events, nor is the great trading post at the mouth of the Amacuro¹⁰² so much as mentioned, although there are several entries in the minutes for the years 1638, 1639, and 1640¹⁰³ about an expedition to the Orinoco under Jan van der Goes in quest of silver. The exploits of Captain 'Llanes' made the venture of Van der Goes possible; but the directors, in their official capacity, entirely ignore the private company and the doings of its agents. The explanation is, no doubt, that so long as Jan de Moor lived he and those associated with him were all-powerful at the board of the Zeeland chamber, and they took good care that their privilege of private trading derived from first possession should not be interfered with.

Nothing can be more instructive than to compare the official minutes of Aug. 1637 concerning the wretched condition of Jan van der Goes and his folk and their desire to return home, and the tale told in a Spanish despatch¹⁰⁴ dealing with the same period and giving evidence of the extraordinary energy of the Dutch traders among the Indians on all the rivers of Western Guiana.¹⁰⁵ 'It is known,' say the writers, 'for certain from the same Aruacs who always report these occurrences that the Dutchman¹⁰⁶ (*i.e.* Llanes) sent to Flanders before that they took Guiana (Santo Thomé) for ships and barter, in order to settle it through the influence they possess with all the natives of the Orinoco and interior, who are in communication with one another by land.'

Later Spanish documents¹⁰⁷ of the year 1640 show that the Dutch were then still strongly posted on the Amacuro in a fortified trading station. This, as the silence of the official Dutch records proves, was not, like that on Essequibo, financed by the Zeeland chamber. We may fairly assume that at this time it was the centre of Groenewegen's activity.

¹⁰⁰ Spanish writers always have a difficulty with Dutch names; thus, Brit. C. App. i. 110, we find 'Cornelio de Morg [Moor] de Frechilingues [Vlissingen].' Schonten appears as Estopa and Oustens, Hein becomes Moyno, and so on.

¹⁰¹ Brit. C. App. i. 146. In a Spanish despatch of 1662 he is spoken of as 'governador de ellas Adrian Arnoto' = Adriaensz Aert.

¹⁰² Brit. C. App. i. 110, 'en la dicha pvoablacion y Puerto de Amacuru de ordinario tienen quatro y seis navios de olanda y muchas eces doce' (p. 124; 'los crexes que estan en una casa fuerte en la boca del Rio de Amacuro.'

¹⁰³ *U.S.C. Rep.* ii. 96-8.

¹⁰⁴ Brit. C. App. no. 45.

¹⁰⁵ Here Aguire, Barima, Amacuro, and Guayapiche are mentioned.

¹⁰⁶ 'El Olandes' (Brit. C. App. i. 116).

¹⁰⁷ Brit. Counter-C. App. pp. 12-14: 'esta fortificado en aquellas costas en los puestos que llaman de amacuro y esquivo,' 1640.

The days of Jan de Moor were now drawing to a close, but a minute of the proceedings of the Zeeland chamber, 5 May 1644, stating that a letter had been read from 'Adriaen Jansz, commandeur at Fort Kijkoveral, in Essequibo,' probably shows that his influence remained unimpaired to the end. In 1641 a daughter of the great Flushing merchant married Adriaen Janszen (de Jonge), son of the burgomaster of Middelburg, who was likewise named Adriaen Janszen,¹⁰⁸ and it is probable that his father-in-law's powerful recommendation caused this man shortly after his marriage to be nominated as commandeur in place of Cornelis Pieterse Hose.¹⁰⁹ In March 1645¹¹⁰ we find Aert Adriaensen [van Scherpenisse] commandeur at Fort Kijkoveral. In the interval between May 1644 and March 1645 Jan de Moor had died, Adriaen Janszen, then at the end of his three years' engagement, had returned home, probably to claim his share of the inheritance, and Groenewegen, now that the master whom he had served so long was no more, had placed his experience and intimate knowledge of the country at the service of the directors, and had by them been appointed to the office which he was to hold until his death in extreme old age in 1664. How valuable such an offer must have been at a time when the whole resources of the West India Company were strained to their utmost by the successful revolt of the Portuguese in Brazil it is needless to say.

Such an explanation of the circumstances makes the whole story hang together in the most natural and consistent manner, and the feeling that it is in all probability correct is enhanced and borne out by the minute of 29 May 1645, to which reference has already been made, where we find the commissioners of the Zeeland chamber, appointed for negotiating the renewal of the company's charter,¹¹¹ complaining of the damage done to the company's profits by private competition, and seeking to get rid of it. Their efforts to attain this monopoly did not apparently meet with entire success; but, if it were to be attained, what time could be so propitious as that immediately following the death of Jan de Moor and the transference of Groenewegen's tried abilities and unrivalled influence with the native tribes to the service of the company?

But one more point remains to be noticed, the Delft element in the early history of the Essequibo settlement. Both Groenewegen and Van der Goes, who, as we have shown, must have worked side by side in positions of authority for some sixteen years, were sprung from the Delft burgher aristocracy. Their fathers had filled high

¹⁰⁸ A 'De Moor' pedigree may be found in the *Kroniek van het Historisch Genootschap te Utrecht* for 1850. This marriage is there recorded. The exact date of Jan de Moor's death is wanting, but it took place in 1644 or 1645.

¹⁰⁹ Hose became commandeur in 1637 (*U.S.C. Rep.* ii. 72).

¹¹⁰ *Brit. C. App.* i. 131; *U.S.C. Rep.* ii. 103.

¹¹¹ The charter of the W.I.C. was granted in 1621 for twenty-five years.

municipal offices in the town, both had remained true to the Roman catholic faith though adherents to the house of Orange, and the families to which they belonged were connected by inter-marriage with those of Van der Dussen, Van der Burgh, and De Bye.¹¹² Jan Adriaansz van der Goes was the son of Adriaan van der Goes, advocate, of Delft, and Maria van Cromstrijen.¹¹³ Aert Adriaansz van Groenewegen was (most probably) a younger son of Adriaan van Groenewegen, burgomaster of Delft in 1575, and Maria van der Burgh.¹¹⁴ In those days of exclusive monopolies it appears at first sight strange that Zeeland directors should have selected, as the first governor of a Zeeland colony, a native of Delft. It becomes quite explicable when we consider that De Moor and his partners would naturally be anxious that the newly appointed official should be acceptable to the man who had taken on their behalf the first settlers to the Essequibo, and who was in charge of their private interests upon that river, and that they may indeed have been guided by Groenewegen's advice in their choice of a commander with whom he must, through family and local ties, have been well acquainted. Such a relationship between the two men removes one more and the last difficulty in the way of the acceptance of Scott's narrative, and adds the final link to the long chain of cumulative evidence which has firmly established its general trustworthiness.

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¹¹² The family tree of the Van der Dussens in Kok's *Vaderlandsch Woordenboek*, xiii. 58, is particularly interesting.

¹¹³ Communicated to me by Mr. C. J. Gonnet, archivaris at Haarlem and editor of *Briefwisseling tusschen de Gebroeders van der Goes*, 1899.

¹¹⁴ Communicated to me by Mr. A. A. Vorsterman van Oijen, of the *Genealogisch en Heraldisch Archief* at Ryswick.

